

Pocket-sized catechism makes learning about faith easy

If you want to learn your catechism without wading through the 802 pages of the Catechism of the Catholic Church - and that's the paperback version - Brother Charles Madden, O.F.M. Conv., has the answer.

He's the author of "The Mini-Catechism," a tiny booklet no larger than a passport subtitled "388 Fundamental Questions and Answers on the Catholic Faith."

The book is based on the old "penny catechisms" that were sold in England and Wales for a penny.

"It's ridiculous to call it a penny catechism when it sells for \$4.50," Brother Charles said with a laugh. "But it's something that's needed. It's ideal - you can slip it into your pocket or purse and it's a handy way to get the essentials of the faith to many people."

He decided to write "The Mini-Catechism" after realizing that some people were intimidated by its big brother, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, issued with much fanfare in 1994.

"They need something small, simple and easy to read," he said.

The older English version was revised to correspond more closely with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and some British terminology was given an American flavor.

But at just 48 pages, it covers faith, the Apostles Creed, hope, prayer, the Commandments, precepts of the church and the sacraments. Need to know the grace before meals? Can't remember The Angelus? Ever wonder how a Christian should start the day? It's all there in the mini-catechism, which has an imprimatur from the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Brother Charles said the book, available at discounted prices for larger orders, is

selling well and is used for missionary work, in prison ministry, in classrooms and in religious education programs.

“What I’d really like to do is see it get in racks at the back of churches,” Brother Charles said. “My main focus is to get that little thing into people’s hands.”

“The Mini-Catechism” is available through local bookstores or from Requiem Press (www.RequiemPress.com); to order, call 1-888-708-7675.